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ABSTRACT

A high level of cooperation between teacher training institutions and the K-12 schools is necessary in today's society, with its myriad problems and possibilities not faced by the preceding generations. Today, many areas face a chronic shortage of teachers in certain crucial content areas, such as science and math. Intern or apprentice programs are trying to meet the needs by introducing people with little or no training to the teaching profession. California State University in Dominguez Hills is coping with the changes through three innovative programs involving networking and partnerships with schools, districts, businesses, community groups, and government agencies. The PORT Program for the recruitment of underrepresented ethnicities into education is one such attempt, and it is both complex and far reaching. Its major focus is the recruitment of interested participants in education and the training or retraining of individuals to become teachers. In addition, the pre-service program in English education has been expanded to work together with teachers to try and give students what they will need in the classroom. Thirdly, in cooperation with a local school district, the state, and various agencies, the university English department attempts to have a positive influence on a specific school program. Overall, when schools of education and K-12 schools work together cooperatively, greater success can be achieved. (HB)

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HEARING REAL VOICES:

COOPERATION IN PRESERVICE ENGLISH EDUCATION

Lenora (Leni) Cook

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Cooperation between teacher training institutions and the K-12 schools usually has been seen as a simple and one way --the college or university trains the teacher candidates and then sends them to the K-12 schools for their practical, yet highly sheltered experiences. The expectations of the university have been that the students will get a mentored, meaningful experience teaching children and ultimately be hired to teach either in the training school's district or another of the student's choice; the expectations of the K-12 schools have been that the students coming to do their practicum have been exposed to and practiced with the target curriculum and that the students have been trained and/or made aware of the needs and abilities of population that they will be teaching. Perhaps once this was enough; but now, with the myriad of problems and possibilities confronted by both the universities and the K-12 schools, in order to be successful, cooperation must involve both sectors in a host of complex relationships, all centered in the K-12 student, his needs, abilities, and aspirations. Successful programs now are a blend of all of the resources of the two educational institutions **and**, in addition, the community, business and industry, and government.

To understand the change in the population concerned with teacher training in today's society, I'd like to do a brief nationwide recap of what we know about teaching certification and teachers across the United States. First, in many areas there is a chronic shortage of teachers in crucial content areas such as mathematics, science, and language acquisition. At the elementary and secondary level, almost every state has the need for bilingual teachers who can help new students of English become literate in their second language while learning academic subjects in their primary language. In order to meet these unrelenting needs many states have set up alternative programs that place people with little or no preliminary training directly in classrooms. Called intern or apprentice programs, these attempts to solve shortages with minimum and temporary licensing requirements are controversial and not always successful. They perpetuate the stereotype of the nonessential nature of education

courses, even though most of them require that, sooner or later, the intern meet the normal licensing requirements of the state. At times, these programs "water down" the educational curriculum by stressing day-to-day strategies for survival rather than long term planning based on theory and practice.

Other movements such as the Professional Standards Assessments for experienced teachers, a national curriculum and assessment of students, and private sector programs such as Teach for America are also changing the focus and the relationships between the public, universities, and schools.

What does this mean for the pre-service English teacher candidate? It means new decisions about the path to his or her career; it means choice, but it also means responsibility and pressures beyond the normal coursework licensing that we "old-timers" are used to.

How have the teacher training institutions coped? What are the new and continuing alliances that are successful in preparing teachers for the 21st Century?

To answer these questions, I'd like to discuss with you three of the programs that my small urban university in the heart of what some in Los Angeles have called "The Curfew Area" others "The Recovery Area" and others the "inner city" are involved with. In the past five years, CSU Dominguez Hills has sought and formed partnerships with schools, school districts, community groups, businesses/industry, and government to train pre-service, intern, and experienced teachers and administrators for our target population.

Now in its fifth year, the PORT Program for the recruitment of underrepresented ethnicities into education has been our most far reaching and complex program. Its parts consist of a model school program which targets two schools in a school district adjacent to the university; a Future Teacher Corps from surrounding high schools which operates a Saturday school tutoring program on campus; a training program for certifying bilingual aides and providing university stipends for moving into teacher training; a yearly oncampus conference for local 9-12 educational units on educational opportunities generally and teacher

training specifically; a speaker's bureau and consultant services provided to local school districts for staff development on multicultural and educational issues; a retraining program for persons changing careers to education, mainly aerospace engineers for mathematics; and a model for training administrators and specialists to work in and with our target school population. All of this is in addition to our regular licensing programs. As you can tell, we are constantly in the schools, and, because of the programs housed on our campus, teachers are constantly at the university.

This PORT grant, from the Carnegie Foundation, has been augmented by federal and foundation moneys such as two Title VII grants, a FIPSE grants for recruitment and training of special education teachers, and monies from the ARCO Foundation, MetLife, and other groups including aerospace companies. We have formed a Consortium with nine other universities including the University of Iowa, Knoxville College, City College of New York, Morgan State, Xavier, Fordham and the University System of Puerto Rico to develop a comprehensive national model for increasing the number and enhancing the preparation of teachers of color.

Perhaps more important to you here today, we have expanded our pre-service programs in English education working together with teachers to construct, pilot, and refine our curriculum so that it mirrors what teachers tell us they need to know in order to be successful in guiding student learning. We have increased our requirements for inschool observation and interaction prior to student teaching; with our interns, we require additional observation and supervised instruction beyond their own classrooms and the state minimums with reflective logs as part of their student teaching portfolio. Our methods courses are a mixture of theory and practice with the emphasis on the latter. In order to facilitate this aspect of our program, we have a "visiting professional program" where practitioners spend a year on our campus supervising student teachers and interns and teaching methods courses. University methods instructors and field supervisors also are required by state law to spend

the equivalent of one quarter every three years in the public schools keeping current by teaching in our subject area. Last year I taught and modeled for an English department in our area. Next year, in addition to my regular instructional load, I will be teaching senior English daily in our oncampus high school, CAMS, the California Academy for Math and Science.

Our students are required to be familiar with the population we train for and meet that requirement in practical ways such as assisting in classes at the school sites prior to their practica as well as the sensitivity process that involves them on our campus and in the field with the various ethnicities and cultures that make up the target population. We require more than "food and festivals" in our multicultural perspective and have an active bilingual and diverse culture specialist program and dare moving to a new basic license with a bilingual and/or language development emphasis.

The third program, one that I am deeply involved in and committed to is in cooperation with a local school district, the state and various community agencies and businesses. Because of the outreach aspect of our university's mission, we are encouraged to become involved with the local community and, in the school of education, with school districts. Many times districts and schools call upon us to consult both formally and informally. Last year we were called upon because a small, single high school unified district in the inner basin of Los Angeles wished to write a state grant for a specialized program. They had in mind an accelerated math high magnet school. What evolved after a series of meetings with the high school and the district personnel was a proposal for an academy for urban ecology. In a small school district like this one, there is no "grant writing" unit, nor is there the time allotment that is needed to compose a proposal. Therefore, with total cooperation and input from the school district, I wrote the seed grant proposal for the funds to set up an implementation group. We were funded and now are deep in planning AFUEL--the Academy for Urban Ecology in Lynwood--a school within a

school, to be funded by the State of CA and local businesses and industry. Because of my past experiences in grant writing and the commitment to their community, one with major problems, of the teachers and district personnel, we hope to be able to develop a high school program which will graduate students who will be trained either for the community in urban occupations or for university enrollment in urban planning, ecology, math and science. This tight cooperation is furthered by the presence in the school district of teaching interns and "graduates" of the Dominguez program.

I feel that in order for teacher preparation to be successful today, it must be composed of five major parts--subject matter competence, pedagogy that reflects what we know about learning, supervised practice, a love of helping students to find and appreciate the wonder of learning, whether it be literature or literacy, and a realistic attitude about the environment, both school and societal, in which we work. When K-12 schools and schools of education work closely together, success is a given.